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No 93

A SPEECH of one of the Barons of the Shire of *B——* at a Meeting of the Barons and Freeholders of that Shire, for Chooſing Commiſſioners to Repreſent them in the enſuing Parliament, Summoned to Conveen at *Edinburgh* the 12th day of *November* 1702.

A SPECIAL of one of the Barons of the Shire of C—— at a Meeting of the Barons and Freeholders of that Shire for Choosing Commissioners to Represent them in the ensuing Parliament, Summoned to Convene at Edinburgh the 12th day of November 1702.

GENTLEMEN,

BEFORE we go to the Chooſing of our Commiſſioners, it may be thought proper, that we Diſcourſe and Reaſon among our ſelves, concerning theſe Matters, which, in all likelihood, ſhall fall under the Conſideration of the enſuing Parliament; and, as I think, the chief ones will be, *The Union of the Kingdoms of* Scotland *and* England, and, *The Succeſſion to the Imperial Crown of this Realm*: Upon both which, it is fit, that our Commiſſioners know the Sentiments of the Barons and Electors of this Shire, and that it be recommended to thoſe, that they, as near as poſſible, obſerve the Opinion of their Conſtituents; in doing which they'll acquit themſelves Honourably, and give us entire Contentment, whatever the Event be.

Having begun to ſpeak on this Matter, I ſhall proceed to tell my thoughts on theſe two Heads, that I may give occaſion to others, who are of more Experience, and may be of more Underſtanding.

Firſt then, as to the *Union*, we cannot fancy a more deplorable State than ours has been, ſince King *James* VI. came to the Throne of *England*. Our Nation has been deſpis'd; our Intereſts neglected, both at Home and Abroad; our Princes and Stateſmen under the Influence of the *Engliſh*, who make us partake with them of the Calamities of War, but we enjoy none of the Conqueſts, and when Peace is made, we are not ſo much as nam'd: So that the Benefit of the Leagues and Treaties of Commerce which we had, before the Year 1603, are loſt; and we're more Enthral'd by the *Engliſh*, than if we were Conquer'd by them.

Wherefore it is neceſſary, that as we are united in the Head, we be likewiſe united in the Body; and if that cannot be obtain'd without Derogation to the Dignity of this Crown and Countrey, that Meaſures be laid down for an entire Diſjunction after Her Majeſty's deceaſe without Iſſue. But in examining the Articles of Union to be propos'd to the enſuing Parliament, it may be recommended to our Commiſſioners, not to be over nice, but to labour ſincerely after a firm Union. I could inſtance in the Hiſtories of ſeveral Countries, Examples of a Voluntar Union of two diſtinct People, ſuch as is now to be treated of, which may ſerve as a Rule, and ought at this time to be examined; but that were to make bad uſe of your Patience and this preſent occaſion.

The next thing which will probably be conſidered in the enſuing Parliament, is the *Succeſſion* to the Crown of *Scotland*, after the deceaſe of Her preſent Majeſty, whom GOD long preſerve: Upon which I ſhall tell my Mind very freely.

The *Scots* Nation may glory in their Loyalty to their Native Prince, and that without interruption in a Lineal Descent, we have been Govern'd by 112 Kings and Queens of the same Royal Blood these 2000 Years and upwards, which no other Nation under Heaven can boast of.

Our Princes have been Banish'd, and a Loyal Party too forc'd to abscond, and that oftner than once or twise: The first Instance I at present remember of, is in the Reign of *Eugenius* the I. and *Fergus* the II. But it was the Pleasure of GOD Almighty to Restore all again.

It is the Interest of every State, who are Govern'd by Kings Hereditary, to have a numerous Royal Family, and that the manner of Succession be distinct and determin'd: For thereby we come to be Govern'd by Persons of our own Blood and Countrey, who are naturally suppos'd to be more Affectionate and Kind than Strangers; and next, we're secure and free from Intestine Broils and Civil Wars, the heavieſt Judgement can befal a People.

At the first institution of the *Scots* Monarchy, our Ancestors for themselves and us their Posterity, oblig'd themselves and us by Oath, to obey none but such as should descend from *Fergus* the I. and till this day we have faithfully kept that Oath.

When the late King *James* the VII. abdicated the Government, it pleas'd the Convention of the Estates of this Kingdom to give Allegiance to such of the Royal Family as were then capable to Govern, without taking notice of others under Age, and by a pause put to the Nomination in the Act, seem'd either to refer the Consideration of the case of others to another occasion, or tacitely to agree, that the first in Blood, should be first in the Right of Succession: Now this Silence may occasion Disturbance in the State, and make those who are invidious of the Glory of the Antiquity of our Royal Family, contribute what they can to abrige the Line of Succession: So it is necessary, that the Matter of Succession, which by the foresaid Act is become dubious, be again ascertained and determined.

It is not unknown, that not many Years ago, we celebrated the Birth of the Son of the late King *James*, upon whom the Title of *Prince of* Wales was conferr'd, and that we thank'd GOD in our Churches for the Blessing of augmenting the Royal Family: And it is not to be forgotten, that among other Aspersions against the late King, it was reported, That He had impos'd that Prince on His People, and that He was a Bastard; and some bold Wretches of these Times, undertook to afford Evidence.

This Imputation was most heinous, and deserv'd Examination: For it is great Dishonour to a Nation ever to have had a Prince guilty of such a Crime; and to settle the Minds of the People in general, a Trial was requisite. Besides, it would signify to the World, that the late Revolution had moe

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Causes than one: So that none of the Princes of *Europe* might take any notice of the Impoſture, whatever Title he ſhould aſſume.

The Wiſdom of the Nation has thought fit to defer this Examination: And ſhumbly move, that our Commiſſioners be deſir'd to crave, That the enſuing Parliament make inquiry into the Legitimacy of the Prince of *Wales*, now when the Matter is freſh before us, and while Evidence may be got. This Trial is neceſſary to ſatisfy the Minds of this People, whoſe Sentiments you very well know are divided on this Head: And it is the Duty of Rulers, and the Intereſt of a People, to have a Matter of this importance clear'd: For if He be an Impoſtour, why is it not declar'd? If He be lawfully Born, why do we ſuffer the Father and Brother of our preſent Sovereign to be ſo maliciouſly injur'd?

I do not ſpeak this, as a Favourer of any particular Perſon, but out of reſpect to the Royal Family, and out of a ſincere deſire of the Peace and Welfare of my Countrey, which I ſee is nearly concern'd in this Matter: For albeit by the Laws of this Kingdom, that Prince is declar'd incapable to exerce the Royal Authority, through His profeſſing the Superſtitions and Errors of *Rome*; yet it may fall out, that He or His Poſterity may, by GOD's Grace, be Converted to our own Faith, (which all good Proteſtants and Chriſtians ought daily to pray for, as well in His reſpect, as in that of all Mankind) and by being Proteſtant, ſhall be rendred capable to Rule His Native Countrey.

Now this brings me to tell my Sentiments of a Succeſſor. And, Firſt, None of the Royal Family being, by Name, excluded, all are capable to ſucceed, they being qualified as the Law requires. Next, all Papiſts are declar'd incapable.

That which, at this time, may be thought proper to be done, were to Confirm the Laws excluding a Popiſh Succeſſor; and to declare who of the Royal Family, at this time, are Proteſtant. But if we require of the Succeſſor to be of our own Confeſſion, we'll exclude all the Deſcendents of King *James* the VI. and be forc'd to ſeek for a King among our ſelves.

But this Declaration being derogatory to the Natural Right of others; Charity, and the earneſt Deſire after the Converſion of all Men to the true Faith, ſhould oblige us to uſe reaſonable Endeavours towards Converting theſe of the Royal Family, who are more near in Blood; and if the attempt prove unſucceſsful, the deed of ſecluding a Popiſh, or otherwiſe Heterodox Succeſſor, would ſeem more juſtifiable: And we ought to judge the more ſoberly in this Point, ſeing it is not long ſince our Forefathers got out of *Egypt*, and (for the moſt part of our ſelves) our being Chriſtians or Proteſtants, is more owing to the Bleſſing of Education, than to a ſerious Examination and true Inſtruction in Matters of Religion.

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To bring about a Conformity in Religion and Manners, betwixt the Royal Family and us, it were to be desir'd, that the Parliament in their Wisdom would invite the Successors of nearer degree, who are Popish or Heterodox in Religion, and in a Foreign Country, to live among us, to learn our Customs, and to receive Instruction from the Professors of the Reform'd Religion; and Hostages, if requir'd, might be given, for the Safety of the Prince or Princess, and for their Return, if our Endeavours to make them capable to succeed, prov'd unsuccessful. We ought not to despair in this Attempt, when we call to mind, that King *James* the VI. a Faithful Asserter of the Reform'd Religion, was Baptis'd with all the Ceremonies of the *Roman* Church; and that many of those of the Royal Family, whose Conversion is propos'd, have not as yet attain'd the Years of Discretion: And it would be the more easy, that they would be under our own Influence, and freed from the Power of Foreigners, Enemies to our Religion and Interest. Besides, this would shew the sincere Love and Respect which, as in Duty bound, we pay to the Royal Blood; and in case of their Obstinacy, would render them culpable of their own Exclusion. It is certain, some Neighbouring States will make their own use of these Princes of our Royal Family who come to be secluded, to disturb the Peace and Welfare of this Isle, will keep them to Threaten us with, on all occasions, till they get what they seek of us; and it may be fear'd, that the Prince who is benefited by this Seclusion, will, for his own Quiet and Security, become too Complacent with the Projects of that Neighbour who has his Competitor in keeping. Nor is it to be supposed, but these secluded Princes of nearer degree, will have a Party among us, ready to embrace all occasions to disturb the State for their sake: And considering our past and present Divisions, with the incessant Endeavours us'd by the Enemies of our Religion and Happiness to foment them, I despair of ever seeing this Nation of one Mind. Wherefore I again urge, that we follow the Rules of Christian Charity, bearing with one anothers Infirmity, and that we labour sincerely to have the Royal Family profess the same Religion with their Subjects, as an effectual Mean, by GOD's Blessing, to obtain a lasting Peace.

And whereas the Succession of Kings is of greater moment, than that of private Persons; it is hoped, the Seclusion of a Popish Successor to the Crown, will not be in Terms more harsh and limited, than these we have in the Act which secludes Papists from their Natural Right of Succession to private Estates: And we ought to hope, that the Light of the Gospel shall overspred the Minds of all these who are in the Darkness of *Romish* Idolatry, and that all the Royal Family shall, sometime or other, be of the same Religion with their Subjects. Wherefore it is fit a Provision be made, in

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caſe thoſe of nearer degree, or their Deſcendents, who are now Papiſts, ſhould hereafter be capable to ſucceed. Beſides, this Limitation of Succeſſion, being a Reſtriction of the Laws of Nature, and of GOD in His revealed Will, and of our original Conſtitution, is a ſort of Perſecution of Perſons differing from us in Religion, rejected by our Confeſſion of Faith, as ſavouring too much of Popery it ſelf.

When the Parliament comes to determine the Succeſſion, by naming one who is to ſucceed Her preſent Majeſty, failing Iſſue of Her Body; I move our Commiſſioners be deſir'd to oppoſe all Oaths of Abjuration of particular Perſons who are nearer in the Line: And I wiſh the Government would ſatisfy themſelves with the Oath of Allegiance, and a competent Militia to maintain it: For it ſeems to me, we have not yet expiated our Guilt of taking contrary Oaths; and it is thought Oaths now a-days, have loſt their Force and eſteem of Sacredneſs, by their frequency and multitude.

It were to be wiſh'd, our Commiſſioners would have a ſingular regard to the Order and Manner of doing Buſineſs; that is, To diſcuſs the matter of the Union of the two Kingdoms, before they think of the Succeſſion: For the union of the Body will determine the union of the Head, which cannot be diverſified. And it is hoped, the Repreſentatives of both Nations will conſider the caſe of thoſe nearer in Blood: For upon due Examination it will be found, that the Matter is ſtill entire. And I pray GOD may inſpire thoſe of the Royal Family, who are next to Her Majeſty in the Natural Line of Succeſſion, with the true Sentiments of GOD's Glory, their Countrey's Good, and their own Honour and Intereſt.

If it happen, that the Articles of Union propos'd be not agreed to, I move that our Commiſſioners be directed to name, as Succeſſor to Her Majeſty, any other Perſon of the Royal Family, except that Prince or Princeſs who is appointed to ſucceed to the Crown of *England*, that by all poſſible means we be ſpeedily freed of this moſt unnatural Conjunction, where the Compoſition, having different and ſeparat Intereſts, acts not uniformly, and one part is becoming more and more Vigorous, while the other is daily Languiſhing, our Blood and Treaſure being imploy'd without recruit, to make the *Engliſh* Nation Strong and Rich.

The Parliament of *England* has of late made ſundry Excellent Laws, for ſecuring the Intereſt and Liberty of the Subject; I wiſh our Commiſſioners would take notice of them, and particularly the Articles in the Act of Settlement of their Government, where there are many excellent Proviſions, whereof the like, if enacted by the Authority of our Parliament, will be very beneficial to this Nation.

The ſhortneſs of Time will not allow me to tell you here, what theſe Laws and Articles are; but I hope I ſhall have occaſion in private Conferences with our Commiſſioners to point them out, and ſhew them other things which may be thought fit to be enacted for our Security and Happineſs. It is enough for me at this time, to have hinted at a few Things, which may be enlarged and digeſted by others who have more Knowledge in Matters of State, only I ſhall ſay this for my ſelf, None can have a more Honeſt Intention.

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